

MOBILE - U.S. Rep. Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, today announced the opening of the United States Department of Homeland Security's grant application period for the FY 2003 Fire Prevention and Safety Grant program. The application period for this program began on October 16, 2003, and applications submitted electronically will be accepted until no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on November 14, 2003.

Applications submitted via postal mail must be received no later than October 31, 2003. The grants, administered by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), a part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), assist rural, urban and suburban fire departments throughout the United States.

According to officials with DHS and FEMA, the Fire Prevention and Safety grants are designed to address the overall fire problem in the United States, especially the death and injury rates to young children, senior citizens and the firefighters who respond to and battle the fires. According to statistics released by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), approximately 2670 people died in residential fires during 2002. "I would encourage any department in the First District interested in this grant program to submit an application," Bonner said. "The men and women who work for our professional and volunteer fire departments in south Alabama put their lives on the line every day to protect and support their neighbors and communities, and they certainly deserve all the support we can provide. This program will enable successful applicants to equip themselves with the knowledge and tools to continue doing their jobs safely, effectively and with the greatest benefit for their cities and towns."

Information on this program and other USFA projects can be found on the agency's website, [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov). Fire Prevention and Safety Grant applications can be downloaded at

[www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/grants/2003grants/03-prev-grants.shtm](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/grants/2003grants/03-prev-grants.shtm)

. Fire departments and other eligible organizations with further questions or in need of additional assistance can also reach Grant Program staff at 866-274-0960. Additionally, changes in federal regulations require that all submitted federal grant applications include a mandatory Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number; this number can be obtained by calling 866-705-5711. Please allow 24 hours for the receipt of this number before completing any program grant application.